



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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NORTH CAROLINA RANKS FIRST IN SOUTHEAST FOR SAFETY BELT USE

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today announced that North Carolina again ranks first in the Southeast region with an 86.7 percent rate for safety belt usage, an increase over last year's 86.1 percent usage rate. The state has been ranked first for 11 of the past 12 years.

"More and more North Carolinians understand that safety belts do save lives, and they are buckling up," said Easley. "Through its educational outreach and enforcement programs, our 'Click It or Ticket' campaign is making a difference, but we must continue to work to reach our goal of 100 percent of people using safety belts when traveling our roadways."

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) tabulates results from observational surveys conducted in select locations in each state. The surveys are conducted annually and the agency's National Center for Statistics and Analysis verifies that states comply with established standards each year.

"Click It or Ticket" was created in North Carolina in 1993. It was the nation's first statewide occupant protection program to combine high-visibility enforcement and public education to increase safety belt and child safety seat use. It has since become the model for NHTSA's national campaign of the same name.

The following is safety belt usage rates for the Southeast region in 2005:

Alabama	Florida	Georgia	Kentucky	Mississippi	North Carolina	South Carolina	Tennessee
81.8%	73.9%	81.6%	66.7%	60.8%	86.7%	69.7%	74.4%

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For a list of all states' safety belt use rates, click on <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/RNotes/2005/809970.pdf>. For more information regarding North Carolina safety belt use, including breakdowns by demographic categories, contact Governor's Highway Safety Program's Public Information Officer Beth Horner at 919/733-3083, or visit the GHSP website at www.ncdot.org/secretary/ghsp.